

REMARKS

This Amendment is fully responsive to the non-final Office Action dated June 4, 2010, issued in connection with the above-identified application. Claims 41-45 are pending in the present application. With this Amendment, claim 41-45 have been amended. No new matter has been introduced by the amendments to claims 41-45. Favorable reconsideration is respectfully requested.

I. Interview Summary

The Applicants thank Examiner Cox for granting the telephone interview (hereafter “interview”) conducted with the Applicants’ representative on August 12, 2010. During the interview, the distinguishable features between the present invention (as recited in independent claim 41) and the cited prior art were discussed in detail. Additionally, proposed claim amendments to more clearly distinguish the present invention from the cited prior art were also discussed.

Specifically, it was noted that the present invention (as recited in independent claim 41) includes an identifying means configured to identify refrigerating specifications and to provide an identification signal indicative of the refrigerating specifications. The identifying means includes a detecting portion provided on the refrigerating unit and a detected portion provided on the heat insulating housing. The detecting portion and the detected portion are moved to a position with respect to each other, which triggers an interaction therebetween when mounting the refrigerating unit on the heat insulating housing.

However, it was noted that Lee merely discloses a microcontroller 16 and a switch 40, wherein the switch 40 closes a circuit so that signals are detected by the microcontroller 16. Additionally, it is not clear from the reference, the exact location of the switch 40 with respect to the microcontroller 16, but it appears that the switch 40 and the controller 16 are at least located within the same structural element.

At the conclusion of the interview, the Examiner indicated that the proposed amendments to the claims would distinguish the present invention from the cited prior art of record.

II. Prior Art Rejections

In the Office Action, claims 41-45 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Lee et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,921,095, hereafter “Lee”) in view of Viegas (U.S. Patent No. 6,062,030, hereafter “Viegas”), and further in view of Linstromberg (U.S. Patent No.

5,606,486, hereafter “Linstromberg”) and Goth et al. (U.S. Publication No. 2003/0000232, hereafter “Goth”).

The Applicants have amended independent claim 41 to more clearly distinguish the present invention from the cited prior art. The amendments to independent claim 41 are consistent with the amendments discussed during the interview conducted on August 12, 2010 (hereafter “interview”). Independent claim 41 recites *inter alia* the following features:

“[a] refrigerating storage cabinet comprising:...

a control unit dedicated for the refrigerating unit, the control unit being configured to select one of the plurality of refrigerating specifications based on the identification signal and to control operation of the refrigerating unit in accordance with the selected one of the plurality of refrigerating specifications, wherein

the refrigerating unit with the control unit is detachably mounted to the heat insulating housing so as to be connected to the storage compartment;

the identifying means includes a detecting portion provided on the refrigerating unit, and further includes a detected portion provided on the heat insulating housing;

the detecting portion and the detected portion are arranged close to each other such that the detected portion and the detecting portion are moved to a position with respect to each other that triggers an interaction therebetween, as a result of mounting of the refrigerating unit to the heat insulating housing;

the identifying means generates the identification signal based on the interaction between the detecting portion and the detected portion....” (Emphasis added).

The features emphasized above in independent claim 41 are fully supported by the Applicants’ disclosure (see e.g., Figs. 12 and 13). The present invention (as recited in independent claim 41) includes an identifying means configured to identify refrigerating specifications and to provide an identification signal indicative of the refrigerating specifications.

The present invention (as recited in independent claim 41) is believed to be distinguishable from the cited prior art in that the identifying means includes a detecting portion provided on the refrigerating unit and a detected portion provided on the heat insulating housing, wherein the detecting portion and the detected portion are moved to a position with respect to each other, which triggers an interaction therebetween when mounting the refrigerating unit on the heat insulating housing.

For example, in one embodiment, a pressure sensor 51 (e.g., detecting portion) is attached on the underside of a predetermined corner of the unit mount 38 of each refrigeration unit 30. A presser 52 (detected portion) is mounted on an upper side of the ceiling of the freezing compartment 16. The presser 52 is biased by a spring (not shown) so as to protrude above the ceiling; and the pressure sensor 51 is adapted to be elastically pressed by the presser 52, thereby switching on. When the pressure sensor 51 is switched on, a selecting portion changes and selects a freezing program Py. And, when the pressure sensor 51 is switched off, the selecting portion selects a refrigerating program Px (see e.g., Figs. 12 and 13).

In the Office Action, the Examiner relies on Lee in view of Viegas, and further in view of Linstromberg and Goth for disclosing all the features recited in independent claim 41. However, the Examiner relies on Lee for disclosing or suggesting the features of the claimed detecting portion and detected portion, recited in independent claim 41. However, the Applicants assert that Lee fails to disclose or suggest all the features of the detecting portion and the detected portion now recited in independent claim 41, as amended.

Independent claim 41 (as amended) recites:

“the detecting portion and the detected portion are arranged close to each other such that the detected portion and the detecting portion are moved to a position with respect to each other that triggers an interaction therebetween, as a result of mounting of the refrigerating unit to the heat insulating housing”.

In the Office Action, the Examiner relies on col. 6, lines 4-15 of Lee. However, col. 6, lines 4-15 of Lee discloses a microcontroller 16 (i.e., detecting portion) and a switch 40 (i.e., detected portion), wherein the switch 40 closes a circuit so that signals are detected by the microcontroller 16. As noted during the interview, it is not clear from the reference, the exact location of the switch 40 with respect to the microcontroller 16 when assembled on the refrigeration units. However, it does appear that the switch 40 and the controller 16 are at least located within the same structural element.

Conversely, in the present invention (as recited in independent claim 41) the detecting portion is provided on the refrigerating unit and the detected portion is provided on the heat insulating housing. Additionally, the detecting portion and the detected portion are arranged close to each other such that the detected portion and the detecting portion are moved to a

position with respect to each other that triggers an interaction therebetween, as a result of mounting of the refrigerating unit to the heat insulating housing.

No such configuration of or interaction between the detecting portion and the detected portion is disclosed or suggested by Lee. Thus, Lee fails to disclose or suggest the features recited in claim 41.

Moreover, Viegas, Linstromberg and Goth fail to overcome the deficiencies noted above in Lee. Accordingly, no combination of Lee, Viegas, Linstromberg and Goth would result in, or otherwise render obvious, independent claim 41 (as amended). Additionally, no combination of Lee, Viegas, Linstromberg and Goth would result in, or otherwise render obvious, claims 42-45 at least by virtue of their dependencies from independent claim 41.

In the Office Action, claim 42 has been rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Lee, Viegas, Linstromberg and Goth, and further in view of Valence et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,600,966, hereafter “Valence”).

Claim 42 depends from claim 41. As noted above, Lee, Viegas, Linstromberg and Goth fail to disclose or suggest all the features recited in independent claim 41 (as amended). Additionally, Valence fails to overcome the deficiencies noted above in Lee, Viegas, Linstromberg and Goth. Accordingly, no combination of Lee, Viegas, Linstromberg, Goth and Valence would result in, or otherwise render obvious, claim 42 at least by virtue of its dependency from independent claim 41.

III. Conclusion

In light of the above, the Applicants submit that all the pending claims are patentable over the prior art of record. The Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner withdraw the rejections presented in the outstanding Office Action, and pass the present application to issue.

The Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned attorney by telephone to resolve any remaining issues.

Respectfully submitted,

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